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Monday, January 21, 2013

EID-Ohio: Sunday Shale Show sits down with Vince Irvin of Ohio Laborers Union (1/20)

EID-Marcellus: Tick-tock on Yoko Ono/Susan Sarandon visit to Dimock last week, plus great video (1/19)

EID-Marcellus: Toxicologist Uni Blake blogs on importance of balanced national energy plan (1/19)

NATIONAL

BLM delays hydraulic fracturing rule. Houston Chronicle/Fuel Fix. In response to criticism from both the oil industry and environmentalists, the Obama administration is scrapping a 2012 plan to impose tough new mandates governing drilling on public lands. Industry trade groups had asked the administration to reconsider the rule after warning that compliance costs could discourage energy production on federal lands. American Petroleum Institute President Jack Gerard said he welcomed the administration's decision but "the real test will be in the substance of the re-proposal."

HF for natural gas being powered by it, too. Associated Press. Advances in hydraulic fracturing technology have powered the American natural gas boom. And now hydraulic fracturing could be increasingly powered by the very fuel it has been so successful in coaxing up from the depths. NOTE: Wall Street Journal, Philadelphia Inquirer, San Francisco Chronicle also report.

Senators Bash EPA for Delaying Decision on Pavillion Report. NGI Shale Daily (sub. req'd). In a letter to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator (EPA) Lisa Jackson Thursday, Republican Sens. Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma and David Vitter of Louisiana blasted the agency's decision to again delay the public comment period on the controversial draft report examining groundwater contamination near Pavillion, WY.

Schlumberger: North America Onshore to See More Wells, Less Rigs. NGI Shale Daily (sub. req'd). Schlumberger, the largest services provider in the world, expects to see 100-150 rigs added to North America's onshore by the end of March, CEO Paal Kibsgaard said during a conference call Friday. However, this year's average count won't overcome last year's. The number of drilled wells in the onshore will be "slightly up" from a year ago but there are no signs of recovery for natural gas drilling, said the CEO.

UPenn project on HF and health aims for release in mid-Feb. New York Times, Blog. A coalition of academic researchers in the United States is preparing to shine a rigorous scientific light on the polarized and often emotional debate over whether fracking for natural gas is hazardous to human health.

INTERNATIONAL

Gas boom relies on fair prices. The Australian, Editorial. Calls this week for federal or state governments to force Australian producers to reserve a fixed portion of their output for domestic consumption reflect buyers' understandable angst at facing higher prices, but Resources Minister Martin Ferguson is right to resist what amounts to protectionism. Governments should limit their interference to helping the gas market become more transparent, relieving buyers and sellers from frustrating periodic negotiations, and allowing market competition to work.

China awards 19 blocks to 16 domestic companies in second shale gas bid round. Platts. China on Monday announced the results of its second shale gas bidding round, awarding the 19 blocks on offer to 16 domestic companies. The companies comprise six state-owned enterprises, eight enterprises owned by local governments and two private-owned companies, the ministry said in a transcript of the proceedings.

Ukraine, Shell Expected to Sign \$10Bln Shale Deal. The Moscow Times. The former Soviet republic, which hopes its big shale gas reserves will help end reliance on costly imports of Russian natural gas, chose Shell last May as a partner to develop the Yuzivska field in the east of Ukraine. Ukraine is said to have Europe's third-largest shale gas reserves at 42 trillion cubic feet (1.2 trillion cubic meters), according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Gas 'fracking' plan is safe and will create jobs, say politicians. Manchester Evening News. Politicians have welcomed news that Salford could host a controversial 'fracking' plant – insisting it is safe, will create jobs and cut fuel bills. As the M.E.N. revealed, energy firm IGas plans to invest millions of pounds exploring for gas near Barton Aerodrome. If it goes well, it is expected the firm will then seek permission to start fracking to extract the energy resource.

CALIFORNIA

Fracking can be done safely. San Francisco Chronicle, LTE. Hydraulic fracturing is not largely unregulated. Fracturing doesn't happen in isolation, it happens inside oil and gas wells, and the construction of those wells is strictly regulated in California. State regulators have proposed expanding these regulations to include new hydraulic fracturing disclosure requirements, a move the industry supports.

View on Aromas anti-fracking group. Monterey Herald, LTE. "Aromas Cares for our Environment" is formed of predominantly outsiders using the good name of Aromas to further their extremist anti-progress, anti-fossil fuel agenda. Let's have a real discussion based on facts so that we can come to reasonable informed conclusions.

COLORADO

Boulder City Council seeks HF guidance. Daily Camera. Boulder needs to have regulations in place -- or if not, at least a moratorium -- to prevent fracking within city limits and on city open space, Councilwoman Suzanne Jones said. Jones raised the issue at the City Council's annual retreat after council members received a letter from a group of environmental activists and Boulder residents asking the city to take a stand against fracking.

Council to consider ballot question on HF ban. The Coloradoan During its work session on Tuesday, Fort Collins City Council will mull whether to place a referred measure on the municipal ballot in April to let voters decide whether to impose a ban on hydraulic fracturing in the city.

LOUISIANA

Natural Gas Boom Boosting Louisiana Manufacturing. NGI Shale Daily (sub. req'd). Louisiana's economic output will grow by \$30 billion between 2011 and 2019 as a result of natural gas-induced investment, according to a report by Louisiana State University's Center for Energy Studies that details the impact of the natural gas boom on the state.

MISSISSIPPI

Natural Gas Boom Boosting Louisiana Manufacturing. NGI Shale Daily (sub. req'd). Louisiana's economic output will grow by \$30 billion between 2011 and 2019 as a result of natural gas-induced investment, according to a report by Louisiana State University's Center for Energy Studies that details the impact of the natural gas boom on the state.

NORTHEAST

Pa. auditor to review wastewater from shale drilling. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. Auditor General Eugene DePasquale will begin a review this week of the state Department of Environmental Protection's water regulation, testing and enforcement program. Calling protection of the state's water resources, including rivers, streams, lakes and groundwater, "one of the biggest issues facing Pennsylvania," Mr. DePasquale said the performance audit will cover the years 2009 through 2012 and take up to a year to complete.

Constitution to Propose Revised Primary Route for Marcellus Pipeline. NGI Shale Daily (sub. req'd). Constitution Pipeline Co. has finalized the route it will propose for a Marcellus Pipeline in a certification application it expects to file with FERC this spring. The revised route features less overall land impacts, including about 87 fewer acres of total forest impacts during construction; about 20 fewer miles of side slope construction; 22 fewer water body crossings; and significantly fewer residences within close proximity of the proposed pipeline.

Maryland Gov. to Spend \$1.5M on HF Study. Energy Digital. Gov. Martin O'Mally of Maryland recently proposed spending \$1.5 million to study the effects of hydraulic fracturing, "fracking," used to extract natural gas from its Marcellus Shale region. The funds will be allocated from the fiscal 2014 budget, and used for stream sampling, economic analysis and a review of the impact of fracking on public health.

OHIO

Billions in private investment earmarked for Ohio drilling. Newark Advocate. More than \$1.2 billion so far has been budgeted for drilling costs in Ohio this year, according to forecasts by several of the companies that have received permits to drill here. Chesapeake Energy, the most active of the field, plans to spend an additional \$1.25 billion before the end of 2014.

Ohio firms expect to hire more construction workers in 2013. Dayton Daily News. John Morris, president of the Ohio Valley

Chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors, said 2013 has the potential to be a good year for construction firms across the region. He said oil and gas exploration and extraction could bring more people and business into the state, which would benefit retail and housing construction.

Benefits of shale ignored by columnist. Columbus Dispatch, LTE. There is a scientific consensus that we have enough natural gas to power America for generations: more than 2,543 trillion cubic feet, according to estimates by the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Natural-gas production is an important issue across the country, but especially in Ohio. Dispatch readers have come to expect measured, thoughtful and accurate pieces. Dyer's column was none of the above.

API welcomes BLM halt on new fracking rules for federal lands. Akron Beacon Journal. President and CEO Jack Gerard welcomed the Bureau of Land Management decision to take proposed federal hydraulic fracturing regulations back to the drawing board.

Consol Shifting Gears in Utica, From Exploration to Development. NGI Shale Daily (sub. req'd). Consol Energy Inc. announced Friday that it would begin shifting its Utica Shale program in Noble County, OH, from exploration to development mode, after seeing encouraging results and data from its test wells and those of its competitors in the play.

Triad awaits OK on brine hauling. The Marietta Times. local disposal company says transporting brine from fracking operations in Pennsylvania to New Matamoras by barge is a better method than trucking, but the U.S. Coast Guard must sign off on it first.

TEXAS

Shale drilling can be a win-win. Austin American-Statesman, Op-ed. Hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling have revolutionized natural gas production in the United States. Today, around 45,000 shale gas wells operate in the U.S., triple the number in 2005. And more than 90 percent of all new onshore oil and gas development in the U.S. today involves some form of hydraulic fracturing. In 2011, natural gas produced in Texas alone made up 28 percent of the nation's production.

Regulatory relief key to energy independence. Austin American-Statesman, Op-ed. We have the entrepreneurship and technological innovation we need. The question is whether we will have the smart public policies that allow them to flourish. While America's energy prospects have never been brighter, regulators have never been more vehement in their push for restrictive controls on development of new energy projects.

VIRGINIA

Oil, gas drilling sparks hope in Virginia's coastal plain. Hampton Daily Press. Among the scattered communities of the lightly populated upper reaches of the Middle Peninsula and the coastal plain, there's been plenty of talk about oil and gas. It's not necessarily talk about the price of gas at the pump, or what oil prices might do in the future, or OPEC, or anything like that. The chatter has been who might strike it rich. And how rich.

WYOMING

EPA owes Wyoming an explanation. Casper Star-Tribune, Column. There's nothing wrong with being thorough. In this case, it's advisable. Reputations of companies and individuals hang in the balance. But when the comment period expires in September, the agency will have accepted input on its draft report for a grand total of 21 months. In that time, landowners with bad water, a company with a red dot on its record and several state agencies have waited for an answer, and none have gotten it. That's too long to wait.

BLM seeks views on massive Wyoming natural gas project. Casper Star-Tribune. The federal Bureau of Land Management will soon begin an environmental review of a sizable drilling project proposed west of Casper. The agency announced Thursday that it is seeking early public input on a potential Environmental Impact Statement for the Moneta Divide drilling project, a proposal that could include 4,250 new natural gas and oil wells on a 265,000-acre plot spanning parts of Fremont and Natrona counties.

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